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Inventor(s): BOUDIER JEAN-FRANCOIS;; COLIN ISABELLE;; LAUNOIS PASCAL
Applicant(s): PROSPERITE FERMIERE COOP LAITI (FR)
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Abstract

The cheese according to the invention is manufactured from skimmed milk retentate powder, which is reconstituted and then acidified using at least one acid-generating agent, preferably glucono delta lactone. After the reconstitution, the retentate can have fat re-added to it, for example anyhydrous dairy fat, and can then be homogenised and pasteurised. It is possible to add, during the acidification, besides the acid-generating agent, lactic leavens, such as mesophilic or thermophilic fermenting agents, coagulating enzymes, such as rennin, and also salt. In the case where salt is added, the cheese will be especially of the salty soft white cheese type.

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Claims only

CLAIMS

1. A process for making cheese, according to which one starts with a reconstituted milk powder, where the milk powder is a powdered retentate of skim milk and where acidification of the retentate is carried out by means of an acidifying agent.

2. A process according to claim 1, where the powdered skim milk retentate is obtained by ultrafiltration of skim milk, followed by spray-drying.

3. A process according to claims 1 and 2, where the powdered skim milk retentate has a content of nitrogen containing material approximately equal to or higher than 50%, preferably 60%, relative to the amount of dry matter.

4. A process according to one of the claims 1 to 3, where the acidifying agent is delta gluconolactone.

5. A process according to one of the claims 1 to 4, where this involves an extra step, consisting of adding butter fat, preferentially anhydrous milk fat, to the reconstituted retentate, followed by homogenisation and pasteurisation of the fat-enriched retentate before acidification.

6. A process according to one of the claims 1 to5, where lactic starter cultures are used during acidification in addition to the acidifying agent.

7. A process according to claim 6, where the lactic starter cultures are mesophile of thermophile enzymes from the genus *Lactobacillus* and/or *Streptococcus*.

8. A process according to one of the claims 1 to 7, where coagulating enzymes are used during the acidification step in addition to the acidifying agent.

9. A process according to claim 8, where the coagulating enzyme is animal rennet or a substitute from microorganisms or plants.

10. A process according to one of the claims 1 to 9, where salt is added during the acification step in dry form or dissolved in water, preferably at 50%.

11. A process according to claim 6, where the acidification step of the reconstituted, re-supplied with fat, homogenised and pasteurised retentate is split into two successive steps. The first, pre-acidification step consists of adding lactic starter cultures to the retentate at 1.5 to 4%, preferably at 2% and letting it mature at a temperature between 20 and 40 °C until a specific pH is reached, between 5.6 and 5.2. The second, actual acidification step consists of adding the acidifying agent, mixing, packaging and letting it

mature to a specific pH between 4 and 4.5, and where the packaged product is stored at a temperature between 5 and 8 °C, once the pH is reached.

12. A process according to claim 11, where during the actual acidification step 0.1 to 1%, preferably 0.5% of the acidifying agent is added to the matured retentate having a pH between 5.6 and 5.2, as well as the coagulating enzymes. The product is subsequently packaged in appropriate containers, filling them only partially, preferably for four fifths (80%; translator) and when a pH between 4 and 4.5 is reached, filling is completed with brine. The product is then stored at a temperature between 5 and 8 °C, still covered with brine.

13. A cheese obtained by the process of claim 12, where this is a firm and brittle, brine-salted type of white cheese.

14. A process according to claim 11, where during the actual acidification step 1 to 4%, preferably 2% of the acidifying agent is added to the matured retentate having a pH between 5.6 and 5.2, as well as the coagulating enzymes and salt.

15. A cheese obtained by the process of claim 14, where this is a brine-salted type of white cheese with a smooth and firm body.

16. A process according to claim 6, where the acidification step consists of adding lactic starter cultures, salt and coagulating enzymes to the reconstituted retentate and allowing it to mature to a given pH between 4 and 4.5 and subsequently by storing the product at a temperature between 5 and 8 °C.

17. A cheese obtained by the process of claim 16, where this is a brine-salted type of white cheese with a very unctuous body.

(Translation F.R. Visser, 600 words.)